The Miller of Mansfield

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THE KING AND THE MILLER of MANSFIELD.

A DRAMATIC TALE.

As it is ACTED at the THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE.

By R. DODSLEY.

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M DCC LXXV.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

M E N.

The K I N G.

The M I L L E R.

R I C H A R D, the *Miller*'s Son.

Lord L U R E W E L L.

Courtiers and Keepers of the Foreſt.

W O M E N.

P E G G Y.

M A R G E R Y.

K A T E.

S C E N E, *Sherwood Foreſt.*

THE KING AND THE MILLER of MANSFIELD.

SCENE, *Sherwood Foreſt.*

Enter ſeveral COURTIERS *as loſt.*

FIRST COURTIER.

'TIS horrid dark! and this wood, I believe, has neither end nor ſide.

Fourth Courtier. You mean to get out at, for we have found one in, you ſee.

Second Courtier. I wiſh our good King *Harry* had kept near home to hunt; in my mind, the pretty, tame deer in *London* make much better ſport than the wild ones in *Sherwood* foreſt.

Third Courtier. I can't tell which way his Majeſty went, nor whether any body is with him or not; but let us keep together, pray.

Fourth Courtier. Ay, ay, like true courtiers, take care of ourſelves, whatever becomes of maſter.

Second Courtier. Well, it's a terrible thing to be loſt in the dark.

Fourth Courtier. It is. And yet it's ſo common a caſe, that one would not think it ſhould

be at all ſo. Why, we are all of us loſt in the dark every day of our lives. Knaves keep us in the dark by their cunning, and fools by their ignorance. Divines loſe us in dark myſteries; lawyers in dark caſes, and ſtateſmen in dark intrigues: nay, the light of reaſon, which we ſo much boaſt of, what is it but a dark-lanthorn, which juſt ſerves to prevent us from running our noſe againſt a poſt, perhaps; but is no more able to lead us out of the dark miſts of error and ignorance, in which we are loſt, than an *ignis fatuus* would be to conduct us out of this wood.

Firſt Courtier. But, my lord, this is no time for preaching, methinks. And, for all your morals, day-light would be much preferable to this darkneſs, I believe.

Third Courtier. Indeed wou'd it. But come, let us go on; we ſhall find ſome houſe or other by and by.

Fourth Courtier. Come along. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the King *alone.*

No, no, this can be no public road, that's certain: I am loſt, quite loſt indeed. Of what advantage is it now to be a King? Night ſhews me no reſpect: I cannot ſee better, nor walk ſo well as another man. What is a King? Is he not wiſer than another man? Not without his counſellors, I plainly find. Is he not more powerful? I oft have been told ſo, indeed; but what now can my power command? Is he not greater and more magnificent? When ſeated on his throne, and ſurrounded with nobles and flatterers, perhaps he may think ſo; but when loſt in a wood, alas! what is he but a common man? His wiſdom knows not which is north and which is ſouth; his power a beggar's dog would bark at; and his greatneſs the beggar would not bow to. And yet how oft are we puffed up with theſe

theſe falſe attributes? Well, in loſing the monarch, I have found the man.

[*The report of a gun is heard.*

Hark! ſome villain ſure is near! What were it beſt to do? Will my Majeſty protect me? No. Throw Majeſty aſide then, and let manhood do it.

Enter the Miller.

Miller. I believe I hear the rogue! Who's there?

King. No rogue, I aſſure you.

Miller. Little better, friend, I believe. Who fir'd that gun?

King. Not I, indeed.

Miller. You lie, I believe.

King. Lie! lie! how ſtrange it ſeems to me to be talked to in this ſtile. [*Aſide.*] Upon my word I don't.

Miller. Come, come, ſirrah, confeſs; you have ſhot one of the King's deer, have you not?

King No, indeed; I owe the King more reſpect. I heard a gun go off, indeed, and was afraid ſome robbers might have been near.

Miller. I'm not bound to believe this, friend. Pray who are you? what's your name!

King. Name!

Miller. Name! yes name. Why you have a name, have not you? Where do you come from? What is your buſineſs here?

King. Theſe are queſtions I have not been us'd to, honeſt man.

Miller. May be ſo; but they are queſtions no honeſt man would be afraid to anſwer, I think. So if you can give no better account of yourſelf, I ſhall make bold to take you along with me, if you pleaſe.

King. With you! what authority have you to——

Miller. The King's authority, if I muſt give

you an account, Sir. I am *John Cockle*, the Miller of *Mansfield*, one of his Majesty's keepers in this forest of *Sherwood*; and I will let no suspected fellow pass this way that cannot give a better account of himself than you have done, I promise you.

King. I must submit to my own authority. [*Aside*.] Very well, Sir, I am glad to hear the King has so good an officer; and since I find you have his authority, I will give you a better account of myself, if you will do me the favour to hear it.

Miller. It's more than you deserve, I believe; but let's hear what you can say for yourself.

King. I have the honour to belong to the King as well as you, and, perhaps, should be as unwilling to see any wrong done him. I came down with him to hunt in this forest, and the chace leading us to-day a great way from home, I am benighted in this wood, and have lost my way.

Miller. This does not sound well; if you have been a hunting, pray where is your horse?

King. I have tired my horse, so that he lay down under me, and I was obliged to leave him.

Miller. If I thought I might believe this now.

King. I am not used to lie, honest man.

Miller. What! do you live at court, and not lie! that's a likely story indeed.

King. Be that as it will, I speak truth now, I assure you; and to convince you of it, if you will attend me to *Nottingham*, if I am near it, or give me a night's lodging in your own house, here is something to pay you for your trouble, and if that is not sufficient, I will satisfy you in the morning to your utmost desire.

Miller. Ay, now I am convinced you are a courtier; here is a little bribe for to-day, and a large

a large promiſe for to-morow, both in a breath: here, take it again, and take this along with it——*John Cockle* is no courtier; he can do what he ought——without a bribe.

King. Thou art a very extraordinary man I muſt own, and I ſhould be glad, methinks, to be farther acquainted with thee.

Miller. Thee! and thou! pr'ythee don't thee and thou me: I believe I am as good a man as yourſelf at leaſt.

King. Sir, I beg your pardon.

Miller. Nay, I am not angry, friend; only I don't love to be too familiar with any body, before I know whether they deſerve it or not.

King. You are in the right. But what am I to do?

Miller. You may do what you pleaſe. You are twelve miles from *Nottingham*, and all the way thro' this thick wood; but if you are reſolved upon going thither to night, I will put you in the road, and direct you the beſt I can; or if you will accept of ſuch poor entertainment as a miller can give, you ſhall be welcome to ſtay all night, and in the morning I will go with you myſelf.

King. And cannot you go with me to-night?

Miller. I would not go with you to-night if you were the King.

King. Then I muſt go with you, I think.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the town of Mansfield.

DICK *alone.*

Well, dear *Mansfield*, I am glad to ſee thy face again. But my heart aches, methinks, for fear this ſhould be only a trick of theirs to get me into their power. Yet the letter ſeems to be wrote with an air of ſincerity, I confeſs; and the girl was never us'd to lie till ſhe kept a

lord

lord company. Let me ſee, I'll read it once more.

Dear Richard,

I am at laſt (tho' much too late for me) convinc'd of the injury done to us both by that baſe man, who made me think you falſe; he contriv'd theſe letters which I ſend you, to make me think you juſt upon the point of being married to another, a thought I could not bear with patience; ſo, aiming at revenge on you, conſented to my own undoing. But, for your own ſake, I beg you to return hither, for I have ſome hopes of being able to do you juſtice, which is the only comfort of your moſt diſtreſs'd, but ever affectionate, PEGGY.

There can be no cheat in this, ſure! The letters ſhe has ſent are, I think, a proof of her ſincerity. Well, I will go to her however: I cannot think ſhe will again betray me: If ſhe has as much tenderneſs left for me, as, in ſpite of her ill uſage, I ſtill feel for her, I'm ſure ſhe won't. Let me ſee, I am not far from the houſe, I believe. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to a room.

PEGGY *and* PHOEBE.

Phœbe. Pray, madam, make yourſelf eaſy.

Peggy. Ah! *Phœbe*, ſhe that has loſt her virtue, has with it loſt her eaſe, and all her happineſs. Believing, cheated fool! to think him falſe.

Phoebe. Be patient, madam, I hope you will ſhortly be reveng'd on that deceitful lord.

Peggy. I hope I ſhall, for that were juſt revenge. But will revenge make me happy? Will it excuſe my falſehood? Will it reſtore me to the heart of my much-injur'd love? Ah! no. That blooming innocence he us'd to praiſe, and call the greateſt beauty of our ſex, is gone.

I have

I have no charm left that might renew that flame I took ſuch pains to quench.

[*Knocking at the door.*

See who's there. O heavens, 'tis he! Alas! that ever I ſhou'd be aſham'd to ſee the man I love!

Enter Richard, *who ſtands looking on her at a diſtance, ſhe weeping.*

Dick. Well, *Peggy*, (but I ſuppoſe you're madam now in that fine dreſs) you ſee you have brought me back; is it to triumph in your falſehood? or am I to receive the ſlighted leavings of your fine lord?

Peggy. O *Richard!* after the injury I have done you, I cannot look on you without confuſion: But do not think ſo hardly of me; I ſtay'd not to be ſlighted by him, for the moment I diſcover'd his vile plot on y u, I fled his ſight, nor could he ever prevail to ſee me ſince.

Dick. Ah, *Peggy!* you were too haſty in believing; and much I fear, the vengeance aim'd at me, had other charms to recommend it to you: ſuch bravery as that [*pointing to her cloaths*] I had not to beſtow; but if a tender honeſt heart could pleaſe, you had it all; and if I wiſh'd for more, 'twas for your ſake.

Peggy. O *Richard!* when you conſider the wicked ſtratagem he contriv'd to make me think you baſe and deceitful, I hope you will, at leaſt, pity my folly, and, in ſome meaſure, excuſe my falſhood; that you will forgive me, I dare not hope.

Dick. To be forc'd to fly from my friends and country, for a crime that I was innocent of, is an injury that I cannot eaſily forgive, to be ſure: but if you are leſs guilty of it than I thought, I ſhall be very glad; and if your deſign be really as you ſay, to clear me, and to expoſe the baſeneſs of him that betray'd and ruin'd you,

I will

I will join with you with all my heart. But how do you propoſe to do this?

Peggy. The King is now in this foreſt a hunting, and our young lord is every day with him: Now, I think, if we could take ſome opportunity of throwing ourſelves at his Majeſty's feet, and complaining of the injuſtice of one of his courtiers, it might, perhaps, have ſome effect upon him.

Dick. If we were ſuffer'd to make him ſenſible of it, perhaps it might; but the complaints of ſuch little folks as we, ſeldom reach the ears of Majeſty.

Peggy. We can but try.

Dick. Well, if you will but go with me to my father's, and ſtay there till ſuch an opportunity happens, I ſhall believe you in earneſt, and will join with you in your deſign.

Peggy. I will do any thing to convince you of my ſincerity, and to make ſatisfaction for the injuries which have been done you.

Dick. Will you go now?

Peggy. I'll be with you in leſs than an hour.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the mill.

MARGERY *and* KATE *knitting.*

Kate. O dear, I would not ſee a ſpirit for all the world; but I love dearly to hear ſtories of them. Well, and what then?

Margery. And ſo at laſt, in a diſmal, hollow tone it cry'd———

[*A knocking at the door frights them both, they ſcream out, and throw down their knitting.*]

Margery and *Kate.* Lord bleſs us! What's that?

Kate. O dear mother, it's ſome judgment upon

on us, I'm afraid. They ſay, talk of the devil, and he'll appear.

Margery. *Kate*, go and ſee who's at the door.

Kate. I durſt not go, mother; do you go.

Margery. Come, let's both go.

Kate. Now don't ſpeak as if you was afraid.

Margery. No, I won't if I can help it. Who's there?

Dick. [*Without*] What! won't you let me in?

Kate. O gemini! it's like our *Dick*, I think: He's certainly dead, and it's his ſpirit.

Margery. Heav'n forbid! I think in my heart it's he himſelf. Open the door, *Kate*.

Kate. Nay, do you.

Margery. Come, we'll both open it.

[*They open the door.*

Enter Dick.

Dick. Dear mother, how do you do? I thought you would not have let me in.

Margery. Dear child, I'm overjoy'd to ſee thee; but I was ſo frighted, I did not know what to do.

Kate. Dear brother, I am glad to ſee you; how have you done this long while?

Dick. Very well, *Kate*. But where's my father?

Margery. He heard a gun go off juſt now, and he's gone to ſee who 'tis.

Dick. What they love veniſon at *Mansfield* as well as ever, I ſuppoſe?

Kate. Ay, and they will have it too.

Miller. [*Without.*] Hoa! *Madge! Kate!* bring a light here.

Margery. Yonder he is.

Kate. Has he catch'd the rogue, I wonder?

Enter the King *and the* Miller.

Margery. Who have you got?

Miller.

Miller. I have brought thee a ſtranger, *Madge*; thou muſt give him a ſupper, and a lodging if thou can'ſt.

Margery. You have got a better ſtranger of your own, I can tell you: *Dick*'s come.

Miller. Dick! Where is he? Why *Dick!* How it's, my lad?

Dick. Very well, I thank you, father.

King. A little more, and you had puſh'd me down.

Miller. Faith, Sir, you muſt excuſe me; I was overjoy'd to ſee my boy. He has been at *London*, and I have not ſeen him theſe four years.

King. Well, I ſhall once in my life have the happineſs of being treated as a common man; and of ſeeing human nature without diſguiſe. [*Aſide.*

Miller. What has brought thee home ſo unexpected?

Dick. You will know that preſently.

Miller. Of that by-and-by then. We have got the King down in the foreſt a hunting this ſeaſon, and this honeſt gentleman, who came down with his Majeſty from *London*, has been with 'em to-day, it ſeems, and has loſt his way. Come, *Madge*, ſee what thou can'ſt get for ſupper. Kill a couple of the beſt fowls; and go you, *Kate*, and draw a pitcher of ale. We are famous, Sir, at *Mansfield*, for good ale, and for honeſt fellows that know how to drink it.

King. Good ale will be acceptable, at preſent, for I am very dry. But pray, how came your ſon to leave you, and go to *London?*

Miller. Why, that's a ſtory which *Dick*, perhaps, won't like to have told.

King. Then I don't deſire to hear it.

Enter Kate, *with an earthen pitcher of ale and a horn.*

Miller. So, now do you go help your mother. —Sir, my hearty ſervice to you.

King.

King. Thank ye, Sir. This plain ſincerity and freedom, is a happineſs unknown to kings. [*Aſide.*

Miller. Come, Sir.

King. *Richard*, my ſervice to you.

Dick. Thank you, Sir.

Miller. Well, *Dick*, and how doſt thou like *London?* Come, tell us what thou haſt ſeen.

Dick. Seen! I have ſeen the land of promiſe.

Miller. The land of promiſe! What doſt thou mean?

Dick. The court, father.

Miller. Thou wilt never leave joking.

Dick. To be ſerious then, I have ſeen the diſappointment of my hopes and expectations; and that's more than one would wiſh to ſee.

Miller. What! would the great man, thou waſt recommended to, do nothing at all for thee at laſt?

Dick. Why, yes; he would promiſe me to the laſt?

Miller. Zoons! do the courtiers think their dependents can eat promiſes?

Dick. No, no; they never trouble their heads to think, whether we eat at all or not. I have now dangled after his lordſhip ſeveral years, tantaliz'd with hopes and expectations; this year promiſed one place, the next another, and the third, in ſure and certain hope of——a diſappointment. One falls, and it was promiſed before; another, and I am juſt half an hour too late; a third, and it ſtops the mouth of a creditor; a fourth, and it pays the hire of a flatterer; a fifth, and it bribes a vote; and, the ſixth, I am promiſed ſtill. But having thus ſlept away ſome years, I awoke from my dream: My lord, I found, was ſo far from having it in his power to get a place for me, that he had been all this while ſeeking after one for himſelf.

Miller. Poor *Dick!* And is plain honeſty then a recommendation to no place at court?

Dick. It may recommend you to be a footman, perhaps, but nothing further, nothing further, indeed. If you look higher, you muſt furniſh yourſelf with other qualifications: You muſt learn to ſay Ay, or No; to run, or ſtand; to fetch, or carry, or leap over a ſtick at the word of command. You muſt be maſter of the arts of flattery, inſinuation, diſſimulation, application, and [*pointing to his palm.*] right application too, if you hope to ſucceed.

King. You don't conſider I am a courtier, methinks.

Dick. Not I, indeed; 'tis no concern of mine what you are. If, in general, my character of the court is true, 'tis not my fault if it's diſagreeable to your worſhip. There are particular exceptions I own, and I hope you may be one.

King. Nay, I don't want to be flatter'd, ſo let that paſs. Here's better ſucceſs to you the next time you come to *London.*

Dick. I thank ye; but I don't deſign to ſee it again in haſte.

Miller. No, no, *Dick*; inſtead of depending upon lords promiſes, depend upon the labour of thine own hands; expect nothing but what thou can'ſt earn, and then thou wilt not be diſappointed. But come, I want a deſcription of *London*; thou haſt told us nothing thou haſt ſeen yet.

Dick. O! 'tis a fine place! I have ſeen large houſes with ſmall hoſpitality; great men do little actions; and fine ladies do nothing at all. I have ſeen the honeſt lawyers of *Weſtminſter-hall*, and the virtuous inhabitants of *'Change-Alley*; the politic madmen of coffee-houſes, and the wiſe ſtateſmen of *Bedlam.* I have ſeen merry tragedies,

dies, and ſad comedies; devotion at an opera, and mirth at a ſermon; I have ſeen fine cloaths at St. *James*'s, and long bills at *Ludgate-Hill*. I have ſeen poor grandeur, and rich poverty; high honours, and low flattery; great pride, and no merit. In ſhort, I have ſeen a fool with a title, a knave with a penſion, and an honeſt man with a thread-bare coat. Pray how do you like *London?*

Miller. And is this the beſt deſcription thou can'ſt give of it?

Dick. Yes.

King. Why, *Richard*, you are a ſatiriſt, I find.

Dick. I love to ſpeak truth, Sir; if that happens to be ſatire, I can't help it.

Miller. Well! if this is *London*, give me my country cottage; which, tho' it is not a great houſe, nor a fine houſe, is my own houſe, and I can ſhew a receipt for the building on't. But come, Sir, our ſupper, I believe, is ready for us, by this time; and to ſuch as I have, you're welcome as a prince.

King. I thank you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the wood.

Enter ſeveral KEEPERS.

Firſt Keeper. The report of a gun was ſomewhere this way, I'm ſure.

Second Keeper. Yes; but I can never believe that any body would come a deer-ſtealing ſo dark a night as this.

Third Keeper. Where did the deer harbour today?

Fourth Keeper. There was a herd lay upon *Hamilton-Hill*, another juſt by *Robin Hood*'s chair, and a third here in *Mansfield* wood.

Firſt Keeper. Ay; thoſe they have been amongſt.

Second Keeper. But we ſhall never be able to find 'em to-night, 'tis ſo dark.

Third Keeper. No, no; let's go back again.

Firſt Keeper. Zoons! you're afraid of a broken head, I ſuppoſe, if we ſhould find 'em; and ſo had rather ſlink back again. Hark! ſtand cloſe. I hear 'em coming this way.

Enter the Courtiers.

Firſt Courtier. Did not you hear ſomebody juſt now? Faith, I begin to be afraid we ſhall meet with ſome misfortune to-night.

Second Courtier. Why if any body ſhould take what we have got, we have made a fine buſineſs of it.

Third Courtier. Let them take it if they will; I am ſo tir'd I ſhall make but ſmall reſiſtance.

[*The Keepers ruſh upon them.*

Second Keeper. Ay, rogues, raſcals, and villains; you have got it, have you?

Second Courtier. Indeed we have got but very little, but what we have, you are welcome to, if you will but uſe us civilly.

Firſt Keeper. O, yes! very civilly; you deſerve to be us'd civilly, to be ſure.

Fourth Courtier. Why, what have we done that we may not be civilly us'd?

Firſt Keeper. Come, come, don't trifle, ſurrender.

Firſt Courtier. I have but three half-crowns about me.

Second Courtier. Here's three and ſix-pence for you, gentlemen.

Third Courtier. Here's my watch; I have no money at all.

Fourth Courtier. Indeed I have nothing in my pocket but a ſnuff-box.

Fourth Keeper. What! the dogs want to bribe us, do they? No, raſcals; you ſhall go

go before the juſtice to-morrow, depend on't.

Fourth Courtier. Before the juſtice! What, for being robb'd?

Firſt Keeper. For being robb'd! What do you mean? Who has robb'd you?

Fourth Courtier. Why, did not you juſt now demand our money, gentlemen?

Second Keeper. O, the raſcals! they will ſwear a robbery againſt us, I warrant.

Fourth Courtier. A robbery! Ay, to be ſure.

Firſt Keeper. No, no; we did not demand your money, we demanded the deer you have kill'd.

Fourth Courtier. The devil take the deer, I ſay; he led us a chace of ſix hours, and got away from us at laſt.

Firſt Keeper. Zoons! ye dogs, do ye think to banter us? I tell ye you have this night ſhot one of the King's deer; did not we hear the gun go off? Did not we hear you ſay, you was afraid it ſhould be taken from you?

Second Courtier. We were afraid our money ſhould be taken from us.

Firſt Keeper. Come, come, no more ſhuffling: I tell ye, you're all rogues, and we'll have you hang'd, you may depend on't. Come, let's take them to old Cockle's; we're not far off; we'll keep 'em there all night, and to-morrow morning we'll away with 'em before the juſtice.

Fourth Courtier. A very pretty adventure!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Mill.

King, Miller, Margery, *and* Dick, *at Supper.*

Miller. Come, Sir, you muſt mend a bad ſupper with a glaſs of good ale; here's King *Harry*'s health.

King. With all my heart. Come, Richard here's King Harry's health; I hope you are courtier enough to pledge me, are not you?

Dick. Yes, yes, Sir, I'll drink the King's health with all my heart.

Margery. Come, Sir, my humble ſervice to you, and much good may do ye with your poor ſupper; I wiſh it had been better.

King. You need make no apologies.

Margery. We are obliged to your goodneſs in excuſing our rudeneſs.

Miller. Prithee, Margery, don't trouble the gentleman with compliments.

Margery. Lord, huſband, if one had no more manners than you, the gentleman would take us all for hogs.

Miller. Now I think the more compliments the leſs manners.

King. I think ſo too. Compliments in diſcourſe, I believe, are like ceremonies in religion; the one has deſtroy'd all true piety, and the other all ſincerity and plain dealing.

Miller. Then a fig for all ceremony and compliments too: give us thy hand; and let us drink and be merry.

King. Right, honeſt Miller, let us drink and be merry. Come, have you got e'er a good ſong?

Miller. Ah! my ſinging days are over, but my

my man Joe has got an excellent one; and if you have a mind to hear it, I'll call him in.

King. With all my heart.

Miller. Joe!

Enter Joe.

Miller. Come, *Joe*, drink, boy; I have promis'd this gentleman that you ſhall ſing him your laſt new ſong.

Joe. Well, maſter, if you have promis'd it him, he ſhall have it.

SONG.

I.

How happy a State does the Miller poſſeſs?
Who wou'd be no greater, nor fears to be leſs;
On his Mill and himſelf he depends for Support,
Which is better than ſervilely cringing at Court.

II.

What tho' he all duſty and whiten'd does go,
The more he's be-powder'd, the more like a Beau;
A Clown in this Dreſs may be honeſter far
Than a Courtier who ſtruts in his Garter and Star.

III.

Tho' his Hands are ſo dawb'd they're not fit to be ſeen,
The Hands of his Betters are not very clean;
A Palm more polite may as dirtily deal;
Gold, in handling, will ſtick to the Fingers like Meal.

IV.

IV.

What if, when a Pudding for Dinner he lacks,
He cribs, without Scruple, from other Men's Sacks;
In this of right noble Example he brags,
Who borrow as freely from other Men's Bags.

V.

Or ſhould he endeavour to heap an Eſtate,
In this he wou'd mimick the Tools of the State;
Whoſe Aim is alone their own Coffers to fill,
As all his Concern's to bring Griſt to his Mill.

VI.

He eats when he's hungry, he drinks when he's dry,
And down when he's weary contented does lie;
Then riſes up chearful to work and to ſing:
If ſo happy a Miller, then who'd be a King?

Miller. There's a Song for you.

King. He ſhould go ſing this at Court, I think.

Dick. I believe, if he's wiſe, he will chuſe to ſtay at home tho'.

Enter Peggy.

Miller. What wind blew you hither, pray! you have a good ſhare of impudence, or you wou'd be aſham'd to ſet your foot within my houſe, methinks.

Peggy. Aſham'd I am, indeed, but do not call me impudent. [*Weeps.*

Dick. Dear father, ſuſpend your anger for the

the preſent; that ſhe is here now is by my direction, and to do me juſtice.

Peggy. To do that is all that is now in my power; for as to myſelf, I am ruin'd paſt redemption; my character, my virtue, my peace, are gone: I am abandoned by my friends, deſpis'd by the world, and expos'd to miſery and want.

King. Pray let me know the ſtory of your misfortunes; perhaps it may be in my power to do ſomething towards redreſſing them.

Peggy. That you may learn from him whom I have wrong'd; but as for me, ſhame will not let me ſpeak, or hear it told. [*Exit.*

King. She's very pretty.

Dick O, Sir, I once thought her an angel; I lov'd her dearer than my life, and did believe her paſſion was the ſame for me: but a young nobleman of this neighbourhood happening to ſee her, her youth and blooming beauty preſently ſtruck his fancy; a thouſand artifices were immediately employ'd to debauch and ruin her. But all his arts were vain; not even the promiſe of making her his wife, could prevail upon her: in a little time he found out her love to me, and, imagining this to be the cauſe of her refuſal, he, by forg'd letters, and feign'd Stories, contriv'd to make her believe I was upon the point of marriage with another woman. Poſſeſs'd with this opinion, ſhe, in a rage, writes me word, never to ſee her more; and, in revenge, conſented to her own undoing. Not contented with this, nor eaſy while I was ſo near her, he brib'd one of his caſt off miſtreſſes to ſwear a child to me, which ſhe did: this was the occaſion of my leaving my friends, and flying to London.

King. And how does ſhe propoſe to do you juſtice?

Dick.

Dick. Why, the king being now in this foreſt a hunting, we deſign to take ſome opportunity of throwing ourſelves at his majeſty's feet, and complaining of the injuſtice done us by this noble villain.

Miller. Ah! *Dick!* I expect but little redreſs from ſuch an application. Things of this nature are ſo common amongſt the great, that I am afraid it will only be made a jeſt of.

King. Thoſe that can make a jeſt of what ought to be ſhocking to humanity, ſurely deſerve not the name of great or noble men.

Dick. What do you think of it, Sir? if you belong to the court, you, perhaps, may know ſomething of the king's temper.

King. Why, if I can judge of his temper at all, I think he would not ſuffer the greateſt nobleman in his court, to do an injuſtice to the meaneſt ſubject in his kingdom. But pray, who is the nobleman that is capable of ſuch actions as theſe?

Dick. Do you know my lord Lurewell?

King. Yes.

Dick. That's the man.

King. Well, I would have you put your deſign in execution. 'Tis my opinion the king would not only hear your complaint, but redreſs your injuries.

Miller. I wiſh it may prove ſo.

Enter the Keepers *leading in the* Courtiers.

Firſt Keeper. Hola! Cockle! where are ye? why, man, we have nabb'd a pack of rogues here juſt in the fact.

King. Ha, ha, ha! what, turn'd highway-men, my lords? or deer-ſtealers?

Firſt Courtier. I am very glad to find your majeſty in health and ſafety.

Second

Second Courtier. We have run thro' a great many perils and dangers to-night: but the joy of finding your majeſty ſo unexpectedly, will make us forget all we have ſuffer'd.

Miller and Dick. What! is this the king?

King. I am very glad to ſee you, my lords, I confeſs; and particularly you, my lord Lurewell.

Lurewell. Your majeſty does me honour.

King. Yes, my lord, and I will do you juſtice too; your honour has been highly wrong'd by this young man.

Lurewell. Wrong'd, my liege!

King. I hope ſo, my lord; for I would fain believe you can't be guilty of baſeneſs and treachery.

Lurewell. I hope your majeſty will never find me ſo. What dares this villain ſay?

Dick. I am not to be frighted, my lord. I dare ſpeak truth at any time.

Lurewell. Whatever ſtains my honour muſt be falſe.

King. I know it muſt, my lord: yet has this man, not knowing who I was, preſum'd to charge your lordſhip, not only with great injuſtice to himſelf, but alſo with ruining an innocent virgin whom he lov'd, and who was to have been his wife; which, if true, were baſe and treacherous; but I know 'tis falſe, and therefore leave it to your lordſhip to ſay what puniſhment I ſhall inflict upon him, for the injury done to your honour.

Lurewell. I thank your majeſty, I will not be ſevere; he ſhall only aſk my pardon, and to-morrow morning be oblig'd to marry the creature he has traduc'd me with.

King. This is mild. Well, you hear your ſentence.

Dick.

Dick. May I not have leave to ſpeak before your majeſty?

King. What canſt thou ſay?

Dick. If I had your majeſty's permiſſion, I believe I have certain witneſſes which will undeniably prove the truth of all I have accus'd his lordſhip of.

King. Produce them.

Dick. Peggy!

Enter Peggy.

King. Do you know this woman, my lord?

Lurewell. I know her, pleaſe your majeſty, by ſight; ſhe is a tenant's daughter.

Peggy. [*Aſide.*] Majeſty! What, is this the king?

Dick. Yes.

King. Have you no particular acquaintance with her?

Lurewell. Hum—I have not ſeen her theſe ſeveral months.

Dick. True, my lord; and that is part of your accuſation; for, I believe, I have ſome letters which will prove your lordſhip once had a more particular acquaintance with her. Here is one of the firſt his lordſhip wrote to her, full of the tendereſt and moſt ſolemn proteſtations of love and conſtancy; here is another which will inform your majeſty of the pains he took to ruin her; there is an abſolute promiſe of marriage before he could accompliſh it.

King. What ſay you, my lord, are theſe your hand?

Lurewell. I believe, pleaſe your majeſty, I might have a little affair of gallantry with the girl ſome time ago.

King. It was a little affair, my lord; a mean affair;

affair; and what you call gallantry, I call infamy. Do you think, my lord, that greatneſs gives a ſanction to wickedneſs? Or that it is the prerogative of lords to be unjuſt and inhumane? You remember the ſentence which yourſelf pronounc'd upon this innocent man; you cannot think it hard that it ſhould paſs on you who are guilty.

Lurewell. I hope your majeſty will conſider my rank, and not oblige me to marry her.

King. Your rank? my lord. Greatneſs that ſtoops to actions baſe and low, deſerts its rank, and pulls its honours down. What makes your lordſhip great! is it your gilded equipage and dreſs? then put it on your meaneſt ſlave, and he's as great as you. Is it your riches or eſtate? the villain that ſhould plunder you of all, would then be as great as you. No, my lord, he that acts greatly, is the true great man. I therefore think you ought, in juſtice, to marry her you thus have wrong'd.

Peggy. Let my tears thank your majeſty. But alas! I am afraid to marry this young lord: that would only give him power to uſe me worſe, and ſtill encreaſe my miſery: I therefore beg your majeſty will not command him to do it.

King. Riſe then, and hear me. My lord, you ſee how low the greateſt nobleman may be reduced by ungenerous actions. Here is, under your own hand, an abſolute promiſe of marriage to this young woman, which, from a thorough knowledge of your unworthineſs, ſhe has prudently declin'd to make you fulfil. I ſhall therefore not inſiſt upon it; but I command you, upon pain of my diſpleaſure, immediately to ſettle on her three hundred pounds a year.

Peggy. May heaven reward your majeſty's goodneſs. 'Tis too much for me; but if your

majeſty thinks fit, let it be ſettled upon this much-injur'd man, to make ſome ſatisfaction for the wrongs which have been done him. As to myſelf, I only ſought to clear the innocence of him I lov'd and wrong'd, then hide me from the world, and die forgiven.

Dick. This act of gen'rous virtue cancels all paſt failings; come to my arms, and be as dear as ever.

Peggy. You cannot ſure forgive me!

Dick. I can, I do, and ſtill will make you mine.

Peggy. O! why did I ever wrong ſuch generous love?

Dick. Talk no more of it. Here let us kneel, and thank the goodneſs which has made us bleſt.

King. May you be happy.

Miller. [*Kneels.*] After I have ſeen ſo much of your majeſty's goodneſs, I cannot deſpair of pardon, even for the rough uſage your majeſty received from me.

[*The king draws his ſword, the miller is frighted, and riſes up, thinking he was going to kill him.* What have I done that I ſhould loſe my life?

King. Kneel without fear. No, my good hoſt, ſo far are you from having any thing to pardon, that I am much your debtor. I cannot think but ſo good and honeſt a man will make a worthy and honourable knight; ſo riſe up, Sir John Cockle: and to ſupport your ſtate, and in ſome ſort requite the pleaſure you have done us, a thouſand marks a year ſhall be your revenue.

Miller. Your majeſty's bounty I receive with thankfulneſs; I have been guilty of no meanneſs to obtain it, and hope I ſhall not be obliged to keep it upon baſe conditions; for tho' I am willing

willing to be a faithful ſubject, I am reſolved to be a free, and an honeſt man.

King. I rely upon your being ſo: and, to gain the friendſhip of ſuch a one, I ſhall always think an addition to my happineſs, tho' a king.

Worth, in whatever ſtate, is ſure a prize,
Which kings, of all men, ought not to deſpiſe;
By ſelfiſh ſycophants ſo cloſe beſieg'd,
'Tis by mere chance a worthy man's oblig'd:
But hence, to every courtier be it known,
Virtue ſhall find protection from the throne.

THE END.

EPISTLES AND POEMS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

By R. DODSLEY.

An EPISTLE *to Mr.* POPE, *occaſion'd by his* ESSAY ON MAN.

GREAT bard! in whom united we admire,
The ſage's wiſdom, and the poet's fire:
And whom at once the great and good commend,
A ſafe companion, and a uſeful friend:——
'Twas thus the Muſe her eager flight began,
Ardent to ſing the poet and the man:
But truth in verſe is clad too like a lie,
And you, at leaſt, would think it flattery;
Hating the thought, I check my froward ſtrain,
I change my ſtyle, and thus begin again.

As

As when ſome ſtudent firſt with curious eye,
Thro' nature's wond'rous frame attempts to pry:
His doubtful reaſon ſeeming faults ſurpriſe,
He asks, if this be juſt? if that be wiſe?
Storms, tempeſts, earthquakes, virtue in diſtreſs,
And vice unpuniſh'd, with ſtrange thoughts oppreſs:
Till thinking on, unclouded by degrees,
His mind is open'd, fair is all he ſees;
Storms, tempeſts, earthquakes, virtue's ragged plight,
And vice's triumph, all are juſt and right:
Beauty is found, and order, and deſign,
And the whole ſcheme acknowledg'd all divine.

So when at firſt I view'd thy wond'rous plan,
Leading thro' all the winding maze of man;
Bewilder'd, weak, unable to purſue,
My pride would fain have laid the fault on YOU.
This falſe, that ill-expreſt, this thought not good,
And all was wrong which I miſunderſtood.
But reading more attentive, ſoon I found
The diction nervous, and the doctrine ſound.
Saw man, a part of that ſtupendous whole,
"*Whoſe body nature is, and God the ſoul.*"
Saw in the ſcale of things his middle ſtate,
And all his powers adapted juſt to that.
Saw reaſon, paſſion, weakneſs, how of uſe,
How all to good, to happineſs conduce.
Saw my own weakneſs, thy ſuperior power,
And ſtill the more I read, admire thee more.

This ſimile drawn out, I now began
To think of forming ſome deſign or plan,
To aid my muſe, and guide her wond'ring lay,
When ſudden to my mind came honeſt GAY.
For form or method I no more contend,
*But ſtrive to copy that ingenious friend:**

* In his firſt epiſtle.

Like him to catch my thoughts juſt as they roſe——
And thus I caught them, laughing at thy foes.

Where are ye now——ye criticks, ſhall I ſay?
Or owls, who ſicken at this god of day?
What! mighty ſcriblers, will you let him go
Uncenſur'd, unabus'd, unhonour'd ſo?
Step forth ſome great diſtinguiſh'd daring dunce,
Write but one page, you ſilence him at once:
Write without fear; you will, you muſt ſucceed:
He cannot anſwer——for he will not read.

Here paus'd the muſe—— alas, the jade is bit,
She fain would copy GAY, *but wants his wit.*
She paus'd, indeed——broke off as he had done,
Wrote four unmeaning lines, and then went on.

Ye Wits, and Fools; ye Libertines, and Saints,
Come pour upon the foe your joint complaints.
Firſt, you who oft, with wiſdom too refin'd,
Can cenſure and direct th' *Eternal Mind*,
Ingenious Wits, who modeſtly pretend
This bungling frame, the univerſe, to mend;
How can you bear, in your great reaſon's ſpight,
To hear him prove, "*Whatever is, is right?*"
Alas! how eaſy to confute the ſong!
If all is right, how came your heads ſo wrong?

And come, ye ſolemn Fools, a numerous band,
Who read, and read, but never underſtand,
Pronounce it nonſenſe—Can't you prove it too?
Good faith, my friends, it may be ſo—to You.

Come too, ye Libertines, who luſt for power,
Or wealth, or fame, or greatneſs, or a whore;
All who true ſenſual happineſs adhere to,
And laugh him out of this old-faſhion'd virtue:
Virtue,

Virtue, where he has whimſically plac'd
Your only bliſs——How odd is ſome men's taſte!

And come, ye rigid Saints, with looks demure,
Who boaſt yourſelves right holy, juſt, and pure;
Come, and with pious zeal the lines decry,
Which gave your proud hypocriſy the lie:
Which own the beſt have failings, not a few;
And prove the worſt, ſometimes, as good as You.

What? ſhall he taint ſuch perfect ſouls with ill?
Shall ſots not place their bliſs in what they will?
Nor fools be fools? nor wits ſublime deſcend
In charity to heaven its works to mend?
Laughs he at theſe?--'Tis monſtrous. To be plain,
I'd have you write—he can but laugh again.

Here lifting up my head, ſurpriz'd, I ſee,
Cloſe at my elbow, flattering Vanity.
From her ſoft whiſpers ſoon I found it came,
That I ſuppos'd myſelf not one of them.
Alas! how eaſily ourſelves we ſooth!
I fear, in juſtice, he muſt laugh at both.

For, Vanity abaſh'd, up to my ear
Steps honeſt Truth, and theſe harſh words I hear;
"Forbear, vain bard, like them forbear thy lays;
"Alike to POPE *ſuch cenſure and ſuch praiſe.*
"Nor that can ſink, nor this exalt his name,
"Who owes to virtue, and himſelf, his fame."

MODERN REASONING.

An EPISTLE *to Mr.* L——.

WHENCE comes it, L——, that ev'ry fool,
In reaſon's ſpite, in ſpite of ridicule,
Fondly his own wild whims for truth maintains,
And all the blind deluded world diſdains;
Himſelf the only perſon bleſt with ſight,
And his opinion the great rule of right?

'Tis ſtrange, from folly this conceit ſhould riſe,
That want of ſenſe ſhould make us think we're wiſe;
Yet ſo it is. The moſt egregious elf
Thinks none ſo wiſe or witty as himſelf.
Who nothing knows, will all things comprehend;
And who can leaſt confute, will moſt contend.

I love the man, I love him from my ſoul,
Whom neither weakneſs blinds, nor whims controul;
With learning bleſt, with ſolid reaſon fraught,
Who ſlowly thinks, and ponders every thought;
Yet, conſcious to himſelf how apt to err,
Suggeſts his notions with a modeſt fear;
Hears every reaſon, every paſſion hides,
Debates with calmneſs, and with care decides;
More pleas'd to learn, than eager to confute,
Not victory, but truth his ſole purſuit.

But theſe are very rare. How happy he
Who taſtes ſuch converſe, L——, with thee!
Each ſocial hour is ſpent in joys ſublime,
Whilſt hand in hand o'er learning's Alps you climb;

Thro'

Thro' reaſon's paths, in ſearch of truth, proceed,
And clear the flow'ry way from every weed;
'Till, from her ancient cavern, rais'd to light,
The beauteous ſtranger ſtands reveal'd to ſight.

How far from this the furious noiſy crew,
Who, what they once aſſert, with zeal purſue?
Their greater right infer from louder tongues;
And ſtrength of argument from ſtrength of lungs.
Inſtead of ſenſe, who ſtun your ears with ſound,
And think they conquer, when they but confound.
Taurus, a bellowing champion, ſtorms and ſwears,
And drives his argument thro' both your ears;
And whether truth or falſhood, right or wrong,
'Tis ſtill maintain'd, and prov'd by dint of—tongue;
In all diſputes he bravely wins the day,
No wonder——for he hears not what you ſay.

But tho' to tire the ear's ſufficient curſe,
To tire one's patience is a plague ſtill worſe.
Prato, a formal ſage, debates with care,
A ſtrong opponent, take him up who dare.
His words are grave, deliberate, and cool,
He looks ſo wiſe———'tis pity he's a fool.
If he aſſerts, tho' what no man can doubt,
He'll bring ten thouſand proofs to make it out.
This, this, and this——is ſo, and ſo, and ſo;
And therefore, therefore—that, and that, you know.
Circles no angles have; a ſquare has four;
A ſquare's no circle therefore—to be ſure.
The ſum of Prato's wond'rous wiſdom is,
This is not that, and, therefore, that not this.

Oppos'd to him, but much the greater dunce,
Is he who throws all knowledge off at once.
The firſt for every trifle will contend;
But this has no opinions to defend.
In fire no heat, no ſweetneſs in the roſe,
The man impos'd on by his very noſe:
Nor light nor colour charms his doubting eye,
The world's a dream, and all his ſenſes lie.
He thinks, yet doubts if he's poſſeſs'd of thought;
Nay, even doubts his very power to doubt.
Aſk him if he's a man, or beaſt, or bird;
He cannot tell, upon his honeſt word.
'Tis ſtrange, ſo plain a point's ſo hard to prove;
I'll tell you what you are—a fool, by Jove.

Another claſs of diſputants there are,
More num'rous than the doubting tribe by far;
Theſe are your wanderers, who from the point
Run wild in looſe harangues, all out of joint.
Vagarius, and confute him if you can,
Will hold debate with any mortal man.
He roves from Geneſis to Revelations,
And quite confounds you with divine quotations.
Should you affirm that Adam knew his wife,
And by that knowledge loſt the Tree of Life;
He contradicts you, and in half an hour
Moſt plainly proves——Pope Joan the ſcarlet whore.
Nor head nor tail his argument affords,
A jumbling, incoherent maſs of words;
Moſt of them true, but ſo together toſt
Without connection, that their ſenſe is loſt.

But leaving theſe to rove, and thoſe to doubt,
Another clan alarms us; face about:
See, arm'd with grave authority, they come,
And with great names and numbers ſtrike us dumb.

With

With theſe an error ven'rable appears,
For having been believ'd three thouſand years.
Reaſon, nay common ſenſe, to names muſt fall,
And ſtrength of argument's no ſtrength at all.
But on, my muſe, tho' multitudes oppoſe us,
Alas! Truth is not prov'd by counting noſes;
Nor fear, tho' antient ſages are ſubjoin'd;
A lie's a lie, tho' told by all mankind.
'Tis true, I love the ancients——but what then?
Plato and Ariſtotle were but men.
I grant 'em wiſe———the wiſeſt diſagree,
And therefore no ſufficient guides for me.
An error, tho' by half the world eſpous'd,
Is ſtill an error, and may be oppos'd;
And truth, tho' much from mortal eyes conceal'd,
Is ſtill the truth, and may be more reveal'd.
How fooliſh then will look your mighty wiſe,
Should half their *ipſe dixits* prove plain lies!

But on, my muſe, another tribe demands
Thy cenſure yet; nor ſhould they 'ſcape thy hands.
Theſe are the paſſionate; who, in diſpute,
Demand ſubmiſſion, monarchs abſolute.
Sole judges, in their own conceit, of wit,
They damn all thoſe for fools that won't ſubmit.
Sir Teſty (thwart Sir Teſty if you dare)
Swears there's inhabitants in every ſtar.
If you preſume to ſay this may'nt be true,
You lie, Sir, you're a fool and blockhead too.
What he aſſerts, if any diſbelieve,
How folks can be ſo dull he can't conceive.
He knows he's right; he knows his judgment's clear;
But men are ſo perverſe they will not hear.
With him, Swift treads a dull trite beaten way;
In Young no wit, no humour ſmiles in Gay;

Nor

Nor truth, nor virtue, Pope, adorns thy page;
And Thomſon's *Liberty* corrupts the age.
This to deny, if any dare preſume,
Fool, coxcomb, ſot, and puppy fill the room.
Hillario, who full well this humour knows,
Reſolv'd one day his folly to expoſe,
Kindly invites him with ſome friends to dine,
And entertains 'em with a roaſt Sir Loin:
Of this he knew Sir Teſty could not eat,
And purpoſely prepar'd it for his treat.
The reſt begin——Sir Teſty, pray fall to——
You love roaſt beef, Sir, come—I know you do.
"Excuſe me, Sir, 'tis what I never eat."
How, Sir! not love roaſt beef! the king of meat!
"'Tis true indeed." Indeed it is not true;
I love it, Sir, and you muſt love it too.
"I can't upon my word." Then you're a fool,
And don't know what's good eating, by my ſoul.
Not love roaſt beef!——Come, come, Sirs, fill his plate,
I'll make him love it—Sir, G—d——you, eat.
Sir Teſty finding what it was they meant,
Roſe in a paſſion, and away he went.

FINIS.